AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0054] with the following:

[0054] Removing substantially all of the water in the context of the present invention means that the water that was naturally contained in the feed material has been removed from such material under the conditions prevailing in the dryer. Residual water content may remain due to, for example, exposure to and absorption of atmospheric moisture. Even if the feed material is not washed, the feed material is still typically passed through dryer 22 so as to substantially [[removed]] remove the ambient water content.

Please replace paragraph [0076] with the following:

[0076] As will be discussed below in greater detail, top surface 135 functions in part to deflect the feed material as it passes down through heating channel 120 so that the feed material is maintained in a continuous and dynamic mixing flow. Although top surface 135 can have a variety of different configurations, if the apex of top surface 135 becomes too flat, a few of the particles of feed material can rest and stagnate thereon. Due to the heat subjected to the stagnate particles, the particles fuse together creating a larger surface area on which more particles can fuse. The fused particles continue to grow until they block the flow of the feed material through the baffles 126. It is then necessary to [[disassembly]] disassemble and clean retort 32. It is also noted that some curved or irregular portions of top surface 135 can cause the feed material to travel at different speeds as it passes over top surface 135. Again, this change in speed can result in stacking of some of feed material within retort 32.

Please replace paragraph [0077] with the following:

[0077] In contrast, narrowing the apex or ridge 53 of top surface 135 forces the feed material to flow down side face 50 or 52, thereby eliminating stagnate particles. The extent to which ridge 53 can be rounded is dependent on a number of factors such as the size of the feed material and the speed of the feed material passing through retort 32. The rounding of ridge 53 can also be adjusted based on the application of external forces such as the vibration of retort 32. By way of example, in one embodiment ridge 53 has a radius of curvature that is less than four times the maximum diameter of the feed material, more commonly less than twice the maximum diameter of the feed material, and even more commonly less than the maximum diameter of the feed material. In yet other embodiments, the radius of curvature or ridge 53 can be equal to or less than about 0.5 times the maximum diameter of the feed material. Other dimensions can also be used.

Please replace paragraph [0078] with the following:

[0078] Depicted in Figures 5A-5I are a plurality of different bodies 138A-I each having a corresponding top surface 135 with a ridge 53. As depicted in Figure 5A, it is appreciated that top surface 135 can have an inverted substantially U-shaped configuration. It is noted with regard to Figures 5B and 5C that the body need not be symmetrical. The alternative bodies also illustrate that a [[singe]] single body can be comprised of a variety of different shapes. Furthermore, as noted in Figure 5I, the body need not be vertically oriented during use but can be oriented to any desired angle. In view of the forgoing it is appreciated that a variety of other shapes can also be used.

Please replace paragraph [0092] with the following:

[0092] The triangular apertures 166 formed on partition wall 118 are further depicted in Figure 10. As shown therein, each aperture 166 has an inverted substantially V-shaped top edge 151 and a substantially flat bottom edge 153. Top edge 151 has a contour complementary to top surface 135 of baffle 126. Accordingly, as the second end of baffle 126 is received within aperture 166, baffle 126 is supported on bottom edge 153 while a close tolerance [[if]] is formed between top surface 135 of baffle 126 and top edge 151 of aperture 166. The residual of aperture 166 not occupied by baffle 126 forms an opening 170 extending through partition wall 118. Opening 170 enables collection channel 149 of baffle 126 to communicate through partition wall 118. As shown in Figure 11, the portion of bottom edge 153 not directly supporting baffle 126 is tapered to a fine edge so as to prevent the unwanted buildup of dust or particles on bottom edge 153.

Please replace paragraph [00101] with the following:

[00101] In another embodiment depicted in Figure 12, baffles 126 need not extend between opposing side walls but can extend as a cantilever from one side wall. Likewise, different baffles 126 can extend from different side walls in a cantilever fashion. Each baffle 126 can serve the same function or different baffles 126 can serve different functions. For example, some baffles 126 can be designed for heating while other are designed to collect vapors. In the various embodiments of the present invention, it is also envisioned that [[the]] they need not all extend in the same direction. For example, some baffles can be rotated horizontally so as to be 90° or other angles relative to other baffles.

Please replace paragraph [00104] with the following:

[00104] In one embodiment of the present invention means are provided for heating the feed material within the heating chamber of the retort. By way of example and not by limitation, one embodiment of the means for heating comprises the various means for heating the baffles as discussed herein. In yet other embodiments, the means for heating comprises the various means for heating the side wall of the retort as discussed herein. In yet other embodiments, it is appreciated that various pipes or tubes can be disposed within the heating chamber. Heated [[gasses]] gases or liquids could then be passed through the pipes or tubes so as to heat the feed material. Electrical conduits can also be disposed directly within the heating chamber. In yet another embodiment, heated gas can be pumped into heating chamber so as to heat the feed material. The present invention also envisions that other conventional systems can be used for heating the feed material within the heating chamber. In alternative embodiments, any one or combinations of the above systems can be used to heat the feed material within the heating chamber so as to extract the oil vapor and other gases.

Please replace paragraph [0143] with the following:

[0143] Furthermore, secondary components such as water vapor, hydrocarbon gases and/or dust can also be mixed with the oil vapor. This combination of components is referred to herein as "smoke." As also previously discussed, the smoke can be further processed as separate streams, thus requiring discrete separators and condensers for each stream, or one or more of the streams of smoke can be combined prior to further processing.